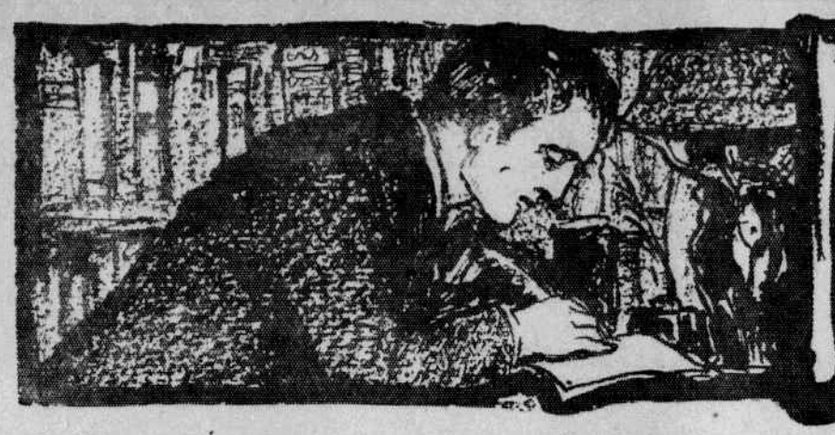

BOOKS

Collected prose of Joyce Kilmer

THE CIRCUS AND OTHER ESSAYS. By Joyce Kilmer. George H. Doran Company.

ANY one who drags his weary soul about the howling wilderness of New York while his heart yearns for a peaceful land with green trees and unhurried people had best acquire a copy of this book and stick it in his pocket to await the moment of depression. Here is an antidote, or at least an anodyne, for the distresses of city dwelling. "Noon hour adventuring," for instance, throws the rosy light of romance over Fifth avenue itself. Fifth avenue is romantic, of course, as well as merely hectic; if one must live in the neighborhood of it, one might as well look at the romance, which is at least as real as anything else about that extraordinary phenomenon. So with several characteristics of the queer attempt at civilization which is manifested in the life of great cities.

Not even Joyce Kilmer, it seems, can attempt to make anything of Broadway; but he is not afraid to cast his glamour over the subway. To the pessimist the subway is merely an illustration of the intelligence of a race which chooses to ride suspended from an underground roaring machine while it reserves the free air and open sky for its horses and motor trucks. But to Joyce Kilmer it was a great adventure in faith and democracy; and also a daily purgatory of souls, to keep them properly conscious of the joys of sunlight and human talk.

Then there is Nellie, the urban awakener, faithful unto death, unwearied in duty, in memory unfailing, in courage unwavering. You wind her up at night and tell her when to crow; in the morning she crows undaunted by flying missles and profane objurgations.

And the commuter, the "daily traveller," as this irrepressible idealist conceives him: even the commuter can be counted worthy of a word of congratulation and esteem. In humble gratitude we bow our heads and slip away into reveries wherein the illtimed jokes of the funny papers can harry us no more.

These are a few of the delightful topics in this collection. The book is made up of a miscellaneous group of essays, some literary criticism and a couple of lectures, evidently intended originally to be part of a book on the art of poetry. Some of the serious papers are addressed rather to Mr. Kilmer's co-religionists than to the general reader, but the others are full of the vivid personality and sense of life and adventure which made Joyce Kilmer a keen pleasure to all who knew him.

Men work best when they are happiest

AMERICAN BUSINESS METHODS. By Floyd W. Parsons. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

MR. PARSONS is a diagnostician who keeps his fingers close to the pulse of industry, and so he has much knowledge at his fingertips. He was the founder of and first editor of the *Coal Age*, and now he edits a department in the *Saturday Evening Post*. The complete title of this vade-mecum is "American Business Methods for Increasing Production and Reducing Cost in Factory, Store and Office." He has taken the whole world of business for his province and discourses on everything from broad general principles to the most infinitesimal minutiæ of office etiquette in a style which is one-fourth "Poor Richard," one-third popular editorial writer and the rest Floyd W. Parsons.

His philosophy is summed up when he says, "Men work best when they are happiest. If this is true it follows that the carrying out of plans looking toward the establishment of healthful surroundings and harmonious relations in all lines of business must result in increased efficiency and maximum production. Health in relation to industry is receiving more serious attention as time goes on."

As a true disciple of the hustling West, Mr. Parsons puts his faith in the power of initiative and invention. He says, "The average man uses only a small fraction, a third to a tenth of his inherent brain power. Why? Because original thought is lacking and that is the only kind that really builds the cells of the brain. No man can really challenge the world's attention unless he has a new idea. Money may be the measure of what people want, but they have to be shown before they know what they want. They did not know that they wanted the telephone, the telegraph, sewing machine or automobile until certain wise leaders foresaw the demand and prepared to meet it. . . . Always it has happened that when humanity has lost its grip and appeared to be floundering in despair, invention has bobbed up and pointed the way to shore. We may kneel and implore the politicians to give us salvation in the form of laws; we may hire able economists to refine and perfect our national monetary system, and we may burn the midnight oil in our efforts to smooth and improve industrial relations, but the problem of high wages, increased production, reduced hours and labor shortage will still remain for the inventor and the engineer to solve with machines which in the coming years will do everything but think."

Mr. Parsons reflects one of our salient national traits in his attitude toward caution. He says, "It is all very well to be cautious, but we should never forget that the power to decide promptly is a greater asset than ability to think exhaustively. The man who decides quickly will sometimes make mistakes, but he will learn more from his experiences than the slow and timid man will ever learn from his days of thought."

In her latest novel of English country life, Sheila Kaye-Smith fuses nature and love in a chronicle of the soul's progress, man's new birth answering to "the young woods which were saved by the mercies of spring"

GREEN APPLE HARVEST. By Sheila Kaye-Smith. E. P. Dutton & Co.

Reviewed by ROBERT J. COLE.

IF a column of type could be concentrated into a sentence that should compel the reader to go to the book itself in place of any review, that sentence would be written here. "Green Apple Harvest" is not a literary topic to be argued about. Read it, hear its music, breathe its air, live in its life.

Sheila Kaye-Smith has rooted her trees in the earth of Thomas Hardy, but they grow up into the sunshine. Her central figure walks among living men and women as human as they, but always a little separate. He is Bunyan's Pilgrim, he is the soul of man pursued by the eternal spirit in Francis Thompson's "Hound of Heaven." But there is nothing vague or mystical in the straightforward narrative.

Here is written the chronicle of a family, of a countryside, of a world. It has the solidity of a single rock. There is no irrelevance, no intrusion. And the complete knowledge of the whole is conveyed to the reader by way of his own heart.

Robert Fuller is first seen through the eyes of Clem, his admiring and often shocked younger brother. The relation between these two is beautifully developed throughout the years. Clem is the steady, obedient, homestaying lad, though by no means weak. The older, the prodigal—stormy, self-willed and self-tortured. He is an incurable lover; but all his life long no other woman took the place of Hannah Iden, the gypsy. When Clem asked him about her he flamed out:

"Is she sweet? Is the fire sweet? Is the winter sweet? Reckon you don't know naun of love. . . . There's a kind wot makes your heart like a broaken stone. . . . Hannah wurn't born to maake men happy—she wur born to maake them men."

He realized that even though she gave herself to him for a time she did not really return his love. For she had "no essential tenderness which he could entreat. Such softness as she had was all on the surface, as the earth bears the loam and the clay over the hard rocks."

There was poetry in his thought of her, long after they had separated.

"His memories grew in the pale light—sharp, regretful things on which the tears hung like rain on thorns. They were memories of this lane, of walks in it long ago, when, with his arm 'round her waist and her head against his shoulder, they had wandered up Silver Hill in the reddening twilight of the young moon, or had seen the brownish gleam of the harvest fields beyond the hedge, while the dusk slowly dredged the earth of light and split it in glowing sparks about the sky. He could feel her breath on his cheek, feel the warmth of her against his arm thrust under her shawl, and hear her loving words that were so few."

And later, even when he saw her changed and coarsened, her eyes yet held their old magic—"those shining, dark, greedy eyes, more the eyes of an animal than of a human being, since their beauty and their wildness seemed to have no roots in a human heart, but to belong to some impersonal quality of the wild and harsh and lovely earth, or of nature in some petty, savage mood, when she strews the ditch with little corpses. There was nothing so big nor yet so little as humanity in Hannah."

One does not feel that Fuller took religion as a substitute for the human happiness he could not win. Yet he was the lover in his worship, like David in the Psalms, and the glory of his experience was lyric.

"Often when he was out at work he would feel, as he told Clem, as if a bucket of light had been upset over him, and, still grasping his spade or the handle of his plough, he would fall on his knees and give himself up to an ecstasy of love and thanksgiving."

Sheila Kaye-Smith.

He could not keep it to himself. He told the story of his conversion to laborers resting by the roadside, to the single tramp with whom he passed a night beside a haystack. Sometimes he went to speak in a humble meeting house. Here is the account of one such excursion:

"It took him nearly five hours to walk to Goudhurst. He followed the high road as far as Gill's Green, then turned into a maze of little creeping lanes by Furnace Farm. He was in Kent now, among the high hills that are like chequer boards with their fallows and ploughs and woods. The lane went twisting down to the Furnace stream, and then up again by Tubslake and Three Chimneys. . . .

"He was beginning to feel tired, for he had done all the farm's duty before he started. . . . He suddenly felt it would be good to turn out of the lane and lie down on the earth-smelling grass of one of those big, quiet fields, just where the shadow of the hedge was lacy on the edge of the sunshine . . . while round him the primrose leaves uncurled, and the spotted leaves of the field orchid broke the green film of their bract, and the warm daisies breathed out a scent that was the caught essence of spring heat and honey. It would be good to lie down there and watch the meadow's conversion, to see spring doing for the Goudhurst fields what free grace had done for Robert Fuller."

But afterward when he went into the little chapel "he felt as if the chief wonder of his message had been left outside, and tried in vain during Mr. Beeman's opening prayers to drag it indoors. He could not relate it to anything inside. On the contrary, it seemed to call him out, to stand in the doorway just where it swung ajar and a little breeze crept in and called him out to the fields and the young woods which were saved by the mercies of spring."

Then came the final meeting with Hannah and his honest effort to save her soul. It ended in failure, catastrophe, disgrace and a period of despair.

The man thought his own soul was lost and his presence a burden to those he loved. He went out in the early morning to drown himself in the pond. But a great voice cried "No!" The very water he was about to abuse forbade him. "The reproach seemed to swell all around him from the fields and from the sunshine—the reproach of beauty crying after the blind." And in these voices the God he feared spoke to him:

"I am your God—doan't you know me? Did you think I was away up in heaven, watching you from a great way off? Didn't you know that I've bin with you all the time? That every time you looked out on the fields or into your kind brother's eyes or at your baby asleep in his bed you looked on me? . . .

"Why do you run away from me and hide like a stupid fox that doan't know its own earth? Why woan't you look and see how beautiful and homely and faithful and loving I am? You can't get away from me. Even if you go down into hell I am there also. I'm a part of your sorrows, as you're a part of mine."

"But, Lord, you've cast me out."

"How could I ever cast you out? I'm plighted to you wud the troth of a mother to her child. You lost me in the mists of your own mind."

It is rare to find a book that brings at once the great and little gifts of beauty. There are few pages one can afford to skip, lest bits like these be missed:

Mary "ate her cake with small, superior bites while calculating the cost of it a pound."

"Polly was more free in her talk than Clem, whose attitude towards his brother was rather that of a careful housewife towards a cracked plate."

But the great things are the revelations of the soul in its progress and the fusion of man's experience with nature as Wordsworth sang of it. And all this is kept within the frame of simple country life, close, understandable and human, as when Clem once refused to go to comfort his brother, sobbing in the next room. With a fine sense of delicacy, he explains to Polly:

"We wurn't never meant to hear that."

If this novel is not a work of genius it is hard to know where one may look for it in contemporary fiction.

Factory worker and society leader seek freedom in their own ways

IN HIS OWN IMAGE. By Mary Briarly. The Macmillan Company.

Reviewed by ELEANOR HAYDEN.

MANY people have wondered about the probable effect of the entrance of women upon the political field and about the probable reactions of women themselves to the public arena. The war, modern economic conditions that make women in industry essential, the whole twentieth century scheme of things, have so changed the outside phases of women's problems that any book that deals with these problems directly and sincerely promises to be interesting. Mary Briarly's book answers some of the questions and poses others equally pressing.

This "In His Own Image" is a courageous book—a book that dares to paint, on the one hand, life as it may be found in certain American cities to-day, and on the other, to suggest life as it might be to-morrow. It is a book with ideals back of it—faiths that a saner, finer kind of life may be possible for the majority. Miss Briarly seems to believe that beneath the rush and roar of the industrial life of cities, the stress of economic activity, the stupidity and lack of comprehension of all classes, the arrogant disloyalty, to be found at times on both sides of the economic fence, beneath the age old prejudices of men and women, there is a potentiality toward more intelligent and adequate living.

Miss Briarly has sent several of her women characters with a fine, blind, brave courage tilting against deep-rooted oppressions of centuries. Enslaved women, whether married or not, win the author's instinctive sympathy. Her brief will convince some women immediately and, perhaps, will convince some men who feel that the existence of an evil does not make it eternal and inevitable.

Despite the underlying basis of belief in the developing personal integrity in men and in women the book is not at all preachy—a little unaware, perhaps it is, of the world, but with a beautiful unawareness that is a relief after many books that see little or nothing to hope for ahead.

As for plot, the book has many interesting situations. In the mill town of Capitol City are located the works of one Bracy Landis, a thorough reactionary and a bit of a brute to boot. The mills are under the management of Garth Hardwick, who has insisted upon modernizing and making habitable the plant for the workers. Gradually the organization is being honeycombed by Reds who want not considerate benevolence but control. Living at the women's dormitory are two girls who play an important part in the story: Veda, a Russian, who has fled before the Bolsheviki in Moscow and knows what terrorism means, and Minnette Doty, a fragile little creature with golden hair who goes sailing around the sky in the plane of Jock Landis, son and heir of the owner of the works. Jock buys her ermine capes and then leaves her with a roll of bills before returning to college. Father Landis meets Minnette after Jock has deserted her. He is fascinated by her and, without knowing of her association with Jock, he asks her to marry him. Of course this means further complexities.

There are two other important women in the book, Margaret Dewitt, a cultured, energetic worker who is bored with society and truly interested in making the community a better place in which to live. Her serving upon the State Board of Charities and Corrections causes an almost definite break with her conventional husband, who still feels that woman's place is the home or, if out, at the bridge table. Margaret cannot evade her responsibilities as a woman and a human being because she is a wife. She makes her decision, realizing that she would never exact of her husband the renunciation of outside duties on the personal grounds upon which he places the issue.

Helen Dewitt, the daughter of these misfits, is a well brought up young girl with her own ideas about technique of living. Then there is Derrick, her thoroughly good flance, the least interesting character in the book. Dr. Bob helps all these women straighten out their tangles because he has the advantage of the point of view of scientific detachment—a long look back and a long look ahead. He talks science and morality in the same breath and says: "Herbert Spencer dared to say that the unrecorded sufferings of women have been without parallel in human history. But nobody paid any attention to him. Society and religion between them had the one competent witness for the prosecution, the wife, safely muzzled."

In addition to all the personal problems in the book there is a good description of a nationwide general strike, crippling every industry, that is broken by the loyal men within the unions who do not countenance the disloyalty to the nation of the mysterious U. X. W. Altogether the book tackles almost every present day problem of importance, but its best work is done in dealing with the political, economic and moral status of women of to-day.

To-day's ads beat ads of yesterday

A SHORT COURSE IN ADVERTISING. By Alex F. Osborn. Charles Scribner's Sons.

TWENTY years ago advertising was artless. That is, while it was pictorial, it was not æsthetic, and while it beckoned you to buy it didn't intrigue you. A glance at the ads of 1900, which help to illustrate this book, reveals their obvious crudity. Unharmonious, boastful, black; the ads of yesteryear shouted, but did not convince.

Side by side in the valuable illustrations Mr. Osborn's book contains are the same products as advertised to-day. Attractive, specific, human, current advertising has modulated its voice and speaks with the consumer's needs in mind. No longer does an ad consist of a blazoned name and a string of superlatives. Copy, type and illustration now work together to persuade the reader that for the service he seeks Soand-so's product is the one he should buy.

The new tactics require expert handling of words, type faces and pictures. They require skilful use of persuasion. Mr. Osborn gives sound advice on these matters, briefly and clearly. His work is a good place to get an introduction to our ramified and mercurial subject.

The author stresses the importance of analysis. Marketing research is the basis of many a successful campaign, just as neglect to analyze the product and investigate conditions has been responsible for more than one failure. Analysis is the crying need. It is the author's main point. It is the advertiser's best friend. In almost every chapter, in almost every connection, the caution is repeated. Mr. Osborn evidently believes in keeping everlastingly at it.

"After the world lost its innocence"

MADAM. By Ethel Sidgwick. Small, Maynard & Co.

IT is Miss Sidgwick's method in developing her pictures of "Mouse" Lancaster and Lina Astley (Mouse called her "Madam" from his first sight of her) to use little strokes, colors, shades of meaning after the manner of the *pointellists*. The result creates a kind of nervous tension while reading the tale, which may be what this English novelist aimed at. For she was telling of a time in London after "the world lost its innocence" through the outbreak of the world war. But whatever her method Miss Sidgwick's style and stories are always distinguished, and this latest one no less so than the rest.

Mott Lane went to the war, one of six brothers, and emerges into this tale as "Mouse" Lancaster, a stable boy turned chauffeur and supremely dissatisfied with life in general. This mood, which threatened to become his dominating trait, led him into all sorts of mild acts of devilment, the first of which was baldly absconding with Miss Carolina Astley's package of buttons in a shop. But in the same moment she became "Madam" to him, his heart's desire likewise. Following his creator's pointellist *taches* of character and career building the reader learns of Mouse's devotion to his elder brother's mistress, the brother who died a flaming corpse in an airplane wreck on the French front; of his talents in the automobile field being recognized by an American expert in that line in London; of his eventual conquest of his instabilities of purpose and life. Filling in the rest of the charming composition is the graceful, sympathetic, helpful Lina, "Madam" in all that sweet, distinguished, old fashioned name connotes. It is Miss Sidgwick's fashion to end her tale on a question: What would Mott's world be like in days to come? The reader will have to think of him (and, thinking so, believe) as Henry Wicken did in his dreams, "mounting with all his peers upon the rising tide."

Hoover is popular with Europeans

EUROPE'S MORNING AFTER. By Kenneth L. Roberts. Harper & Brothers.

Reviewed by JOSEPH GOULD.

MR. ROBERTS is first cousin to Mark Twain's Connecticut Yankee. He observes present day conditions in Europe with a satiric aloofness. He has very little sympathy with the complex European background. He is eager to find simple solutions for intricate problems. It is a very charming and naive attitude. However, people are such strange critters that it can't be done. He extracts all the humor from situations which are in themselves pathetic or uncomfortable. Above all he sympathizes with distress. In this he represents the best attitude of America. And he is also American enough to crow a little bit over our world-wide philanthropic achievements.

He says "in almost every central European city one is apt to find photographs of Hoover staring frowningly at him from shop windows. Whenever Americans meet in central Europe they invariably agree that there is only one man in America who has a thorough knowledge of the horrifying and dazing mess into which Europe has fallen—and that Hoover is the man. The new Prime Minister of Poland stared out of the window of the former Russian Governor-General's palace and informed me in a cold and hard voice that there wasn't a child in Poland to-day who would ever forget the name of Herbert Hoover. He also stated unemotionally that the people of Poland will establish an institution which shall perpetuate Hoover's name forever."

Mr. Roberts does not claim a like infallibility. He says: "Everything from international boundaries to domestic postal rates was in a state of flux. I make this statement for the benefit of people who, like so many others who have read my remarks on Europe, may be impelled to write to me and ask whether it would be advisable for a man with a capital of $117.54 to go to Vienna or Budapest or Warsaw, to engage in the automobile—or any other business. I wish to answer these people now and in the following way, to-wit: Their guess is as good as anybody's. The statements in the book apply only to the months when they were being collected. They were accurate at the time. The book is not a guide to conditions which exist to-day and which will exist next week, but it is a record of what I believe to be the lowest spots of Europe's morning after."

Here is the author's description of the little two by four republic of Rusina, an adjunct of Czecho-Slovakia: "You have the young American who talks Pittsburgh slang, and becomes the President of a central European State; you have the natives in picturesque embroidered vests, high black boots and loose white pants with fringes at the bottom; you have an old castle on a hilltop in the double capacity of seminary and a President's home; you have equal parts of intrigue and scenery; you have everything in fact, except Mr. George M. Cohan.

The point of view of those who talk United States is well set forth by Mr. Harris when he says: "To Americans who are accustomed to regard the founding of Plymouth colony and the courtship of Miles Standish as the very dawn of history the European history-hound is an incomprehensible and unmitigated bore." However, he dimly realizes that people who live in glass houses should not throw dice. He makes several appealing admissions of ignorance. He believes that the Magyar slaughter of the Bolshevik is not worse than our lynchings, although he is scornful of Italian superstitions and says of them: "Somehow or other these things do not sound just right to us intellectual Americans, who prefer the more practical ouija board to such puerile fancies as dream books."

Mr. Roberts was very much struck with the fact that hatred flourishes so persistently in this region. He says: "A central Europe hate is one of the most persistent and acrimonious hates that ever entered the hating business," and, "No Hungarian can outhate a Czech so long as the Czech's hater has a single cylinder on which to run."

However, the author has picked up the hatred germ, and the subject of his hymn of hate is the Peace Conference. He says: "The Peace Conference has displayed as much wisdom and judgment in settling the affairs of central Europe as a Hottentot might be expected to display in repairing a badly damaged typewriter." Another sweet jab is the following: "Many people ask why it is that the Peace Conference should be referred to as an august assemblage or an august body. The reason is very simple. August is a month which makes everybody in central Europe hot, and so does the Peace Conference."

Mr. Roberts's hatred of the Peace Conference springs from a belief that its bungling has added greatly to the untold misery of humanity. Even the profound satisfaction experienced by American statesmen in explaining its weak points to their admiring countrymen can hardly make up for the old burdens left or the new burdens placed upon European backs.

He illustrates this point by what he says of Austria: "Austria is a little country, but she holds about as much misery to the square inch as any other nation ever held. The Peace Conference, as I said at the beginning, has stripped her of everything she needs in order to exist, but it has left her with enough hunger to supply all the other nations with a liberal amount. It's the only thorough and complete job that the Peace Conference did."